

# Does Hispanic Congressman Ideology Differ by Country of Origin?

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## Research Questions:

1. Does the country of origin for a Hispanic member of Congress affect their voting record to expand, contract, or vote neutral on immigration bills?
2. Does the percentage of Hispanics in a district and their country of origin affect the voting record for their Hispanic representatives in Congress?

## Hypotheses:

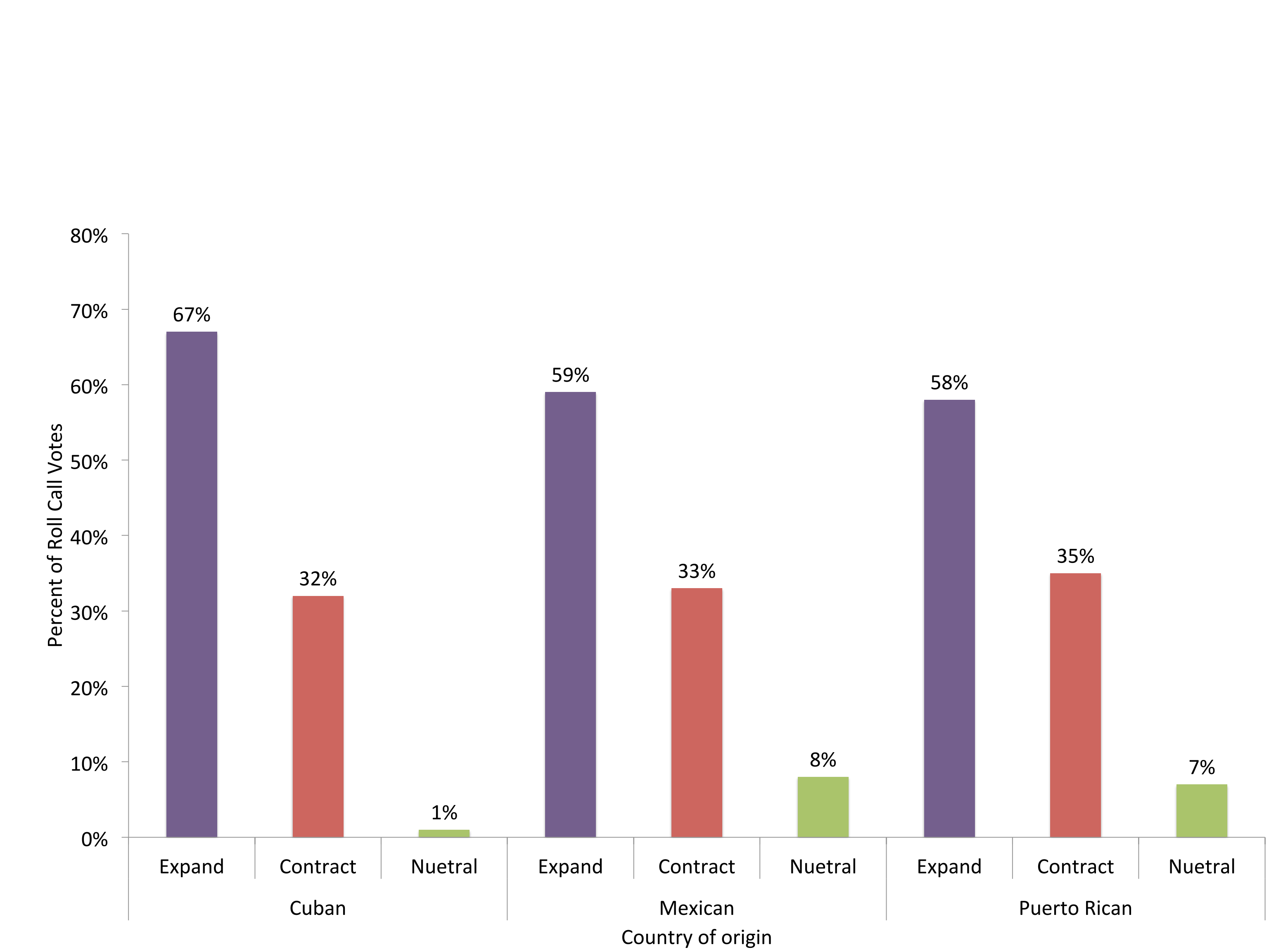
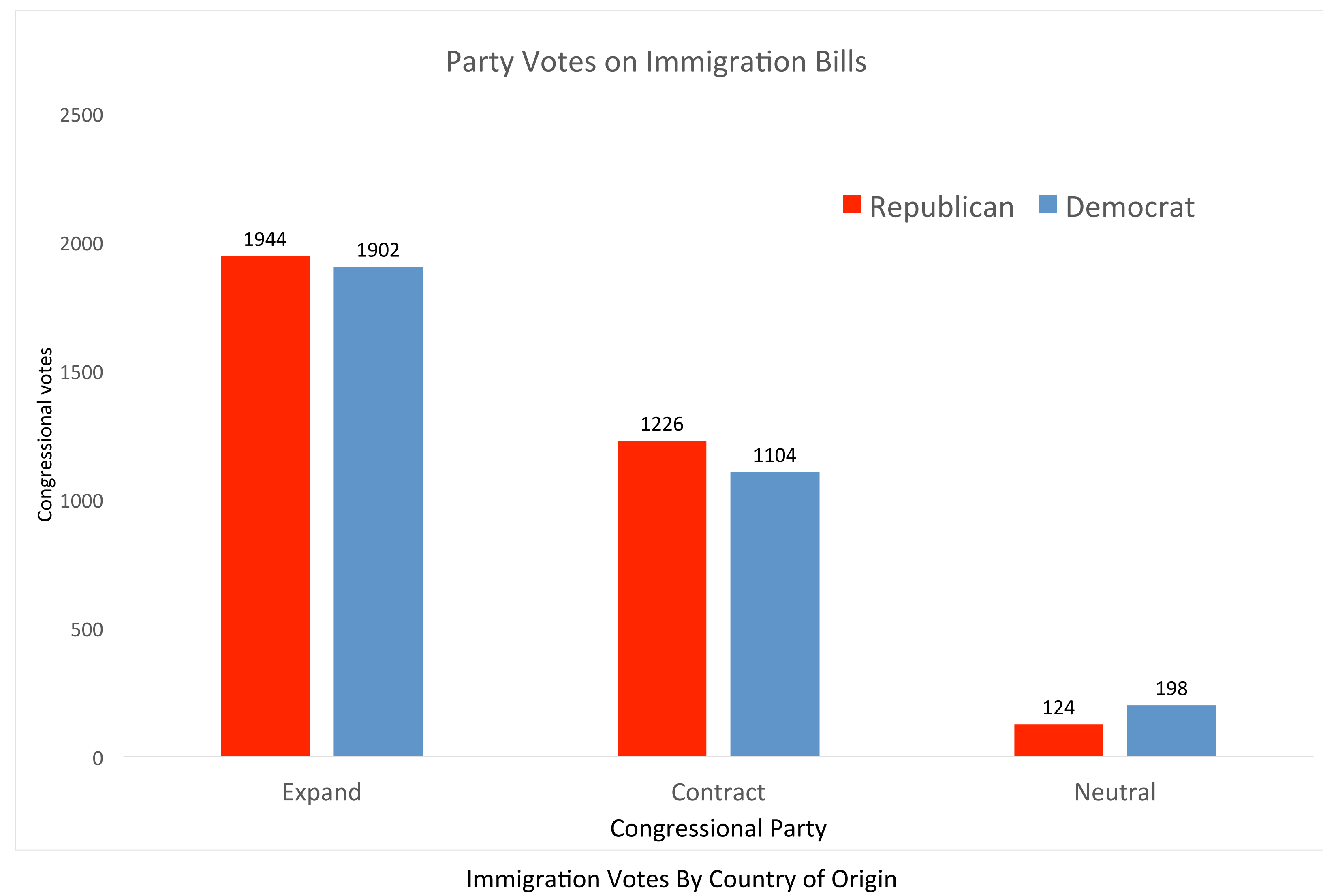
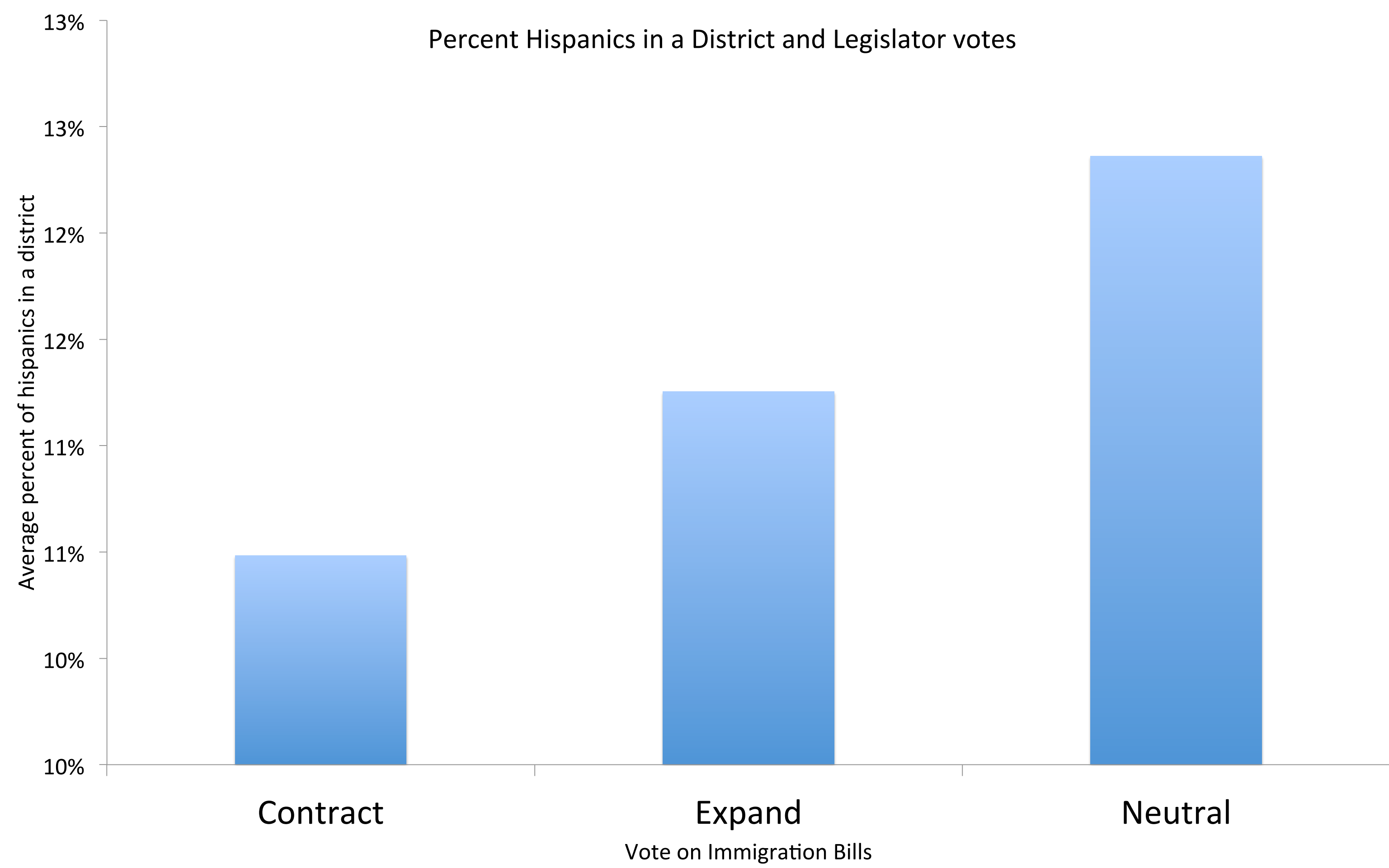
1. I hypothesize that the country of origin of a Hispanic Member of Congress affects their voting behavior. Therefore, if they came from a controlling government (Cuban Americans) then they would vote more often to contract immigration policy.
2. If they came from a more Laissez-faire governing structure they will be more likely to vote for bigger government policy. Therefore, Puerto Rican and Mexican Americans would vote more to expand immigration then to contract immigration.

## Methods:

- Collect Roll Call votes on Immigration bills for the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress (2001-2003) from Policy Agendas Project .
- Collect 2000 US Census data for Hispanic percentage within a district.
- Code country of origin data on Hispanic Members of Congress from their website.
- Determine whether an immigration bills purpose is to Expand, Contract, or be Neutral.
- Determine whether a congressman voted, individually, to Expand, Contract, or be Neutral.

## Definitions

- Contract – increased defense appropriations against illegal immigration, increased application fees, shortened deadlines for labor certifications.
- Expand- extends filing deadlines for naturalization and payment of fees, limits fees, aid illegal alien adjustment to naturalization.
- Neutral – member not voting due to absence commemorations of administrative changes.



## Findings:

- When the average percent of Hispanics in a district is lowest the Congressman is more likely to vote to contract immigration (10.48 %)
- Republicans and Democrats voted 59% of the time to expand immigration.
- Republicans had more votes to contract immigration then Democrats. 37% of Republican votes versus 34% of Democrat votes.
- 67% of Cuban American members of congress voted to expand immigration. 32 % to contract immigration.
- 59% of Mexican American members of congress voted to expand immigration. 33% to contract immigration.
- 58% of the Puerto Rican members of congress voted to expand immigration. 35% to contract immigration.

## Conclusion

- Cuban Americans who were Republican voted specifically on contraction bills if they pertained to expanding border defense against illegal immigration.
- Cuban Americans voted most to expand immigration.
- The amount of Hispanics in a district does affect voting record. The higher the percentage of Hispanics in a district the more votes there are to expand immigration no matter the party.
- Republicans and Democrats voted the same ,on average, to expand immigration.

## Further Research:

- Further research can be done with data on country of origin demographics within a district from the Pew Research Center. Specifically , to test the districts country of origin affect on voter ideology towards immigration and other key topics.